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# CORNISH CLAY

# STRIKE,

## THE WHITE COUNTRY

## DISPUTE.

*Proceeds to be given to the Central Strike Fund.*

PERHAPS its interesting and I guess you would like
To read the account of the Cornish Clay Strike ;
Well, the men at Carne Stents were the first to down tools,
And for taking that action were counted as fools.

But you see their policy proved a blessing in disguise,
And has proved to the world that those men were wise.
Virginia men next, they had the nerve,
And around Fal Valley they then did swerve.

To Kernick and Trethosa their course they took,
And down into these pits the crowd did look ;
But the men were ignorant of the Union resolution,
The great problem to them had no solution.

Well friend, I think they passed by Goonvean,
And held a great meeting at the bottom of Nanpean.
The organisers were there the strikers to meet,
Who stood on the hedge and the men on the street.

From this rude platform the problem they solved,
Then for a general stoppage they then resolved.
At the close of the meeting we were asked to remain,
To lay down our plans for the great campaign.

At Foxhole we agreed, next morning to meet,
The old system of wages we determined to defeat ;
For wages at present only just kept us alive,
But now we were bent to reach the "twenty-five."

The course we then took was a place called Lanjeth,
And when we got there we were just out of breath.
But whilst waiting there a kind friend we found,
Who opened his gate and in the field we sat down.

By the leaders, on the ground, some speeches were given,
And by the time they had done the clock had struck eleven.
After some consultation as to the course we should take,
The men were unanimous for Blackpool to make.

As we surrounded the pit the men looked like fools,
But had not the courage to throw down their tools.
Then down in the pit the leaders they went
To get out these men we were all fully bent.

But waiting and shouting until we were hoarse,
We thought it advisable to proceed on our course.
Halviggan from there was reached pretty soon,
By the time we got there the hour had reached noon.

We came unawares and caught the men in a bunch,
Who had gathered in the lodge and were eating their lunch.
After stating our business and why we were out,
The pasties were put away and the men gave a shout.

So out they came manly and the work was just cleared,
I guess then the Captain was a little bit scared
When he looked down in the bottoms and saw just a few,
He was driven to his wits end to know what to do.

Then to Littlejohns, Dorothy and Dubbers we went,
But the men worked away, all appeared quite content;
Then straight for St. Dennis to a mass meeting we made,
But the men of St. Dennis were a tiny bit afraid.

The meeting was over but the storm it was brewing,
We were like Gideon's army, faint, yet pursuing.
Our homes we reached and were glad to rest,
But the fighting spirit we all had possessed.

Next morning the men at Trethosa and Kernick came out,
But a message was sent and soon the motor was about;
Then, all three Treviscoes came out in their turn,
By this time, I tell you, the fire it did burn.

Then the quarries were swept and thro' Nanpean we went
To meet the other contingent at Karslake we were bent.
We were quite a big army as we passed thro' Carthew,
For the big demonstration which we had in view.

By this time we were five or six hundred strong,
It almost scared the poor women as the crowd passed along.
After a long march we reached St. Austell town,
When the employers were meeting we were marching around.

We made for the Fair Park and had a big demonstration,
As we listened to our Champion 'twas a great consolation.
The meeting was over and I would just like to say,
In the china clay area it was a red letter day.

The following day for Bugle we made,
For the men out that way were just a little afraid.
Pit after pit was soon made clear,
Until we came to Wheal Roseveare.

The crowd gathered around and the men heard our petition,
But hadn't had heart to leave their position;
I tell you straight without any fear,
I was ashamed of the men at Wheal Roseveare.

Well, by this time we were just all out on strike,
But you know what those weak-kneed fellows are like,
For in a few days after all had quit work,
The blacklegs like cowards back to the pits they did shirk.

The Cornish blood then commenced to boil,
When they discovered these articles going back to their toil ;
So we appointed the time to meet at Karslake,
Short work of the scabs and blacklegs to make.

Of course, the western districts were all pretty firm,
So off to the Bugle district we all did swarm.
There were quite a few police to look after the crowd,
For you know that breaking the law was not allowed.

The Strike Committee by this time had met
To call out the enginemen and stop all engines you bet.
For permission was given the water to pump,
To keep down the water from rising in the sump.

When the Masters decided to starve us out,
The Committee thought it time to look about.
In the morning on the west the men dashed to Retew,
And on the east the strikers set out for Carthew.

The enginemen came out almost to a man,
For the sight of the big crowd they couldn't stand.
To us it was laughable to see the smoke,
But to the bosses, I guess, it wasn't a joke.

In drawing the fires it took quite a time,
But I must now hasten on to finish my rhyme ;
By taking this action we held the situation,
And thus defeated the Merchants' association.

Thus pickets were appointed and their vigil they kept,
All thro' the night-watches whilst their partners slept.
Now the people of Mid-Cornwall very often do say—
"Its just like a Sunday every day."

In the china clay area the motors are near flying,
To starve out the men the employers are trying ;
But the Cornish are solid and determined to fight
To get the twenty-five shillings which they think is their right.

The world is now watching with an anxious eye,
To help these gallant claymen we hope you will try.
There is just one word more and then I have done—
Please give a donation to the Strike Relief Fund.

Yours, &c.,

A CLAY WORKER.